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Statement of Facts
connected with the repairing
of the Morrison building.

Henry B. Searle,
Architect.



Class F204

Book M884

STATEMENT OF FACTS

CONNECTED WITH THE

Repairing of the Morrison Building,

AND

PUTTING IT IN ORDER

FOR THE

USES OF THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT.

HENRY R. SEARLE, ARCHITECT,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

WASHINGTON :

1872.

Exp.

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STATEMENT OF FACTS
CONNECTED WITH THE
REPAIRING OF THE MORRISON BUILDING,
AND PUTTING IT IN ORDER FOR THE
USES OF THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT.

HENRY B. SEARLE, Architect, Washington, D. C.

There has been a good deal said about this building, and feeling that there was an impression upon the public mind of some cause for censure in this work, and the Board of Public Works having, through their counsel, singled me out for attack before the Congressional Investigating Committee—stating that “it was impossible to believe that Mr. H. R. Searle had acted faithfully or economically in the matter,” I have concluded to give the facts in the case as far as I know them and let the public judge for themselves. I do not yet believe there has been any wrong committed by those who were employed to do the work, but if there is any wrong I propose to show that the responsibility does not rest with me, for I had nothing to do with the employment of the men or the payment of them, and in all acts obeyed my instructions as near as I could understand them.

On Friday or Saturday, May 20th or 21st, 1871, Mr. J. G. Naylor came to my office with Mr. McKnight’s buggy and said he wanted me to go with him to the Morrison Building. I did so. There I met Messrs. W. A. Cook, A. R. Shepherd, and J. W. McKnight. Mr. Shepherd stated they had sent for me to take charge of the building and put it in order for the offices of the new District Government, and that I must make my plans right away so that the work could commence

immediately. We went through the building and talked over some of the changes to be made. I went back to my office, got my measurement book and tape-line, and with an assistant measured the whole building and made a plan as it was, then marked on the plan the changes as I understood them.

On Monday morning while I was at Mr. Taylor's house, on Vermont avenue, Mr. Shepherd came along in his buggy and handed me the following letter from Governor Cooke:

[Copy.]

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
OFFICE BOARD PUBLIC WORKS,
Washington May 20, 1871.

HENRY R. SEARLE, Esq., *Architect*:

SIR: You are appointed architect of the Morrison Building, on 4½ street, to prepare and submit a plan of alteration of the building for the purpose of District offices, and to superintend the work which may be necessary to put the building in proper condition for the purpose indicated.

Very respectfully,

H. D. COOKE, *Governor*.

At the same time that he gave me the letter he stated that Mr. J. G. Naylor was to have immediate charge of the work at the building and that the furnishing was to be done by Mr. J. W. McKnight. Upon this I wrote the following letter to Mr. Naylor:

WASHINGTON, May 23d, 1871.

J. G. NAYLOR.

DEAR SIR: Please call at my room this afternoon, and be prepared to commence work on the Morrison Building, 4½ street, to-morrow morning.

Yours &c.,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect*.

On Tuesday I submitted the plans to Mr. Shepherd at his office, and where I also met W. A. Cook. Mr. Shepherd marked such changes as at that time he thought desirable, and also designated the purpose for which many of the rooms were to be used, and asked me to make an estimate of the

cost. Mr. Naylor about this time proposed Mr. Thomas Lewis to do the brick work required in these alterations, and supposing that I had charge of the building I employed Mr. Thomas Lewis to do that work, and had told him to prepare for it; but happening to speak of it to Mr. Shepherd, he at first rather objected on the ground that Mr. Thomas Lewis was not quite friendly, but afterwards allowed it would answer, as one of Mr. Lewis' sons was favorable; but soon after I received the following card:

[Copy.]

Mr. H. R. SEARLE:

I want this man, Wm. Simpson, to do all the bricklaying *jobbing* in the Morrison Building. Please put him to work at once.

A. R. SHEPHERD.

After receiving this card, I went to Mr. Lewis, and, in as few words as possible, told him it was necessary for me to put some one else at work at the Morrison Building in his place. After this I received the following, one after another:

[Copy.]

Mr. SEARLE:

I wish the bearer, Bernard West, to do any plastering or pointing in the Morrison Building.

When will you have the estimate.

A. R. SHEPHERD.

[Copy.]

Mr. SEARLE:

I should like Mr. Wyvill to have any work in his line at the Morrison Building.

A. R. SHEPHERD.

26 May, '71.

[Copy.]

Mr. SEARLE:

Please give what concreting you have to do to Martin Fitzgerald, and oblige.

A. R. SHEPHERD.

[Copy.]

DEAR SEARLE:

I should like Mr. J. W. Boteler to have all in his line at the Morrison Building. Please give him the order.

A. R. SHEPHERD.

[Copy.]

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington, Aug. 25, 1871.

MY DEAR SIR:

If you can conscientiously do anything for C. E. Creecy, esq., I will be obliged to you.

Very respectfully,

JAMES A. MAGRUDER.

To H. R. SEARLE, ESQ., Washington, D. C.

I also received the following with the endorsement on the envelope from Mr. Shepherd:

[Copy.]

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 26, 1871

A. R. SHEPHERD, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR: Permit me very respectfully to introduce Mr. Jno. Hogan, who will make known his business. He is a Republican.

Respectfully your obdt. servant,

SAM CROSS.

[Copy.]

Endorsement.

Mr. H. R. SEARLE, E st., 7 and 8:

Give this man a chance on the *awnings* at Morrison Building.

After this experience, I did not think best to put any one else at work without Mr. Shepherd's consent, and as two men applied to me for the whitening of the ceilings, I addressed the following to Mr. Shepherd, which he returned with the endorsement:

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 26, 1871.

A. R. SHEPHERD, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR: A colored man by the name of Parry, and a white man named John E. Peters, want to do the whitening of the ceilings in the Morrison Building. Have you any one you would prefer there.

Truly yours,

H. R. SEARLE.

[Copy.]

Endorsement.

None, if they are good men and Republicans.

A. R. SHEPHERD.

When I was ready for a paperhanger I went to Mr. Shepherd to see who should be employed. He was not at home, but Mr. Thomas Shepherd told me that Mr. Alexander would be his brother's choice, and for me to see him. I did not do so; but later in the day Mr. Alexander called upon me and said Mr. Thomas Shepherd had sent him to me. Supposing I was doing what Mr. A. R. Shepherd would desire, I employed Mr. Alexander and set him at work scraping the wall. When Mr. A. R. Shepherd returned he said the papering must be divided, and that Mr. Dorsey must have one house. I so arranged it with Mr. Alexander and Mr. Dorsey that each had one house. I did not think the selections of paper by Mr. Dorsey were proper for a business building, and I objected to them. I then found that J. W. McKnight was responsible for Mr. Dorsey, and Mr. McKnight proposed I should go to Baltimore with him and select paper. I did so. He paid the railroad fare for both going and for our dinner, which was not an extravagant one, and I paid the railroad fare for both returning. Here I wish to state that this was the only trip I have ever taken with Mr. McKnight, and the statement in the *Patriot* that I went to New York city with Mr. McKnight to fix up the bills for the Morrison Building was entirely false; for I never went to New York with him, and never went there on any business connected with the Morrison Building.

When it was decided to fire-proof the south rear building I ordered the iron beams from the Phœnix Iron Company, Philadelphia, on my own responsibility, and the iron doors and windows from the Architectural Iron Company, New York. For the iron doors and windows I first got their proposal, which, considering the small amount of work and the haste with which it must be made, I did not consider too

much, and therefore gave them the work without further inquiry.

Mr. McKnight was anxious to have the bill for the furniture, but Mr. Thomas Shepherd had told me that A. R. Shepherd desired that Mr. Wight should have a part of the furnishing; and for this reason, and because I heard some complaint about McKnight not being a proper dealer, I did not give it to him right away, and finally told him I thought Mr. Shepherd desired to divide the bill. Upon this he went after Mr. Shepherd and brought him in his buggy to my office, when I got in with them and the three of us went down to the building, went all through it and consulted about carpets and furniture. Mr. Shepherd left us on the sidewalk in front of the building, saying: "You and McKnight can now go and make up the bill." McKnight and myself went to the City Hall and acquired such information as we could as to the wants of the officers, then went to my office, and with the plans before us made up a bill to the amount of about \$12,000. (It will be seen by referring to my estimate that this bill was about double what I had estimated.) Mr. McKnight remarking that there was not enough furniture, I told him I would rather have too little than too much. Soon after this Mr. A. R. Shepherd spoke to me and said the Governor desired Mr. Wight to have a portion of the furnishing, and wanted to know if the bill was made out. I told him it was, and no change was made.

When the occupants were moving in, more furniture was called for. I went to Mr. Shepherd, told him more was wanted and that Mr. Wight could have a chance. He told me to go to the Governor and state the case and do as he told me. I did so. The Governor told me to give part to McKnight and part to Wight. When I told McKnight this he said, "Don't give the bill till I see you again." He went to see the Governor, came back and said, "All right, do as you like; the Governor agrees to see that I am elected to the House of Delegates again." So Wight had a part of the furnishing and McKnight is a member of the House of

Delegates. This last bill was an increase of about five thousand dollars, making a total of furniture by McKnight and Wight of \$16,782.82, instead of \$6,000, as I had estimated, and which increased this bill nearly three times my estimate, with the knowledge and consent of the Governor.

When Mr. Boteler's bill for articles of furniture in his line was made up, Mr. Boteler and myself sat down in my office, with the plans before us, and made out a list for each office as we thought would be needed. In the matter of looking-glasses, Mr. Boteler and myself were in the Morrison Building deciding about them, when we met Mr. Shepherd and consulted with him about them, and they were satisfactorily agreed upon before they were ordered. Mr. Boteler's bill was not included in any estimate I had made.

The following is the estimate spoken of at the commencement of this statement:

Estimate, No. 1.

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS:

GENTLEMEN: The following is an approximate estimate of the cost of preparing the "Morrison Building" for the use of the Territorial Government:

Taking down partitions and cleaning out:.....	\$200 00	
Putting up stud partitions.....	150 00	
10 new doors with glass casings, &c.....	500 00	
Repairing base, &c.....	100 00	
" plastering, 400 yards new.....	300 00	
" floor	100 00	
135 superficial feet of glass roof.....	300 00	
135 " " " floor	300 00	
8 sqr. of tin, @ \$15.00.....	120 00	
Sash partitions in each store, \$2.50 each.....	500 00	
100 feet of counters @ \$8.....	800 00	
Shelving back of counters for books, &c.....	500 00	
	<hr/>	\$3,870 00
Cleaning down front	200 00	
Painting woodwork, &c., outside and in.....	800 00	
Frescoing and papering	700 00	
Awnings to 63 windows and two large ones in front.....	584 00	
	<hr/>	2,284 00

Two-story fireproof vault for Collector, Water Register, and Board of Public Works—

52,000 brick.....	\$1,000 00	
636 superficial feet of Seneca stone floor and lining, @ \$3.00	1,958 00	
Fire-proof lining.....	200 00	
3 pairs of iron doors.....	1,000 00	
Shelving.....	200 00	
	<hr/>	\$4,358 00

Plumbing—

200 feet sewers, different sizes	400 00	
Changing gas-pipe	200 00	
15 water closets, complete, \$100 each....	1,500 00	
9 urinals, \$25 each.....	225 00	
16 washbasins, \$75 each.....	1,200 00	
Gas fixtures	555 00	
	<hr/>	4,080 00

Stoves, furnaces, and grates... ..	2,000 00	2,000 00
Furniture, carpets, &c.	6,000 00	6,000 00

Rear Building, fire proof—

375 feet beams, @ \$2.50.....	937 50	
35,000 brick, @ \$20.....	700 00	
75 yards cement roof.....	100 00	
3,000 feet “ and strips, 8 cts.....	240 00	
12 iron windows and shutters	1,200 00	
6 “ doors and frames, \$75....	450 00	
Base	150 00	
Plastering.....	272 00	
Painting.....	100 00	
	<hr/>	4,149 50

\$26,741 50

Very respectfully,

Your obd't serv't,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

Washington, May 31, 1871.

The date of this estimate will show that it was made within eleven days after I was appointed as architect, and not when the work was nearly completed, as the Governor testifies; and this is the only regular estimate I ever made on this building.

Estimate No. 2.

Taking down partitions and cleaning out.....	\$200 00	
Putting up stud partitions.....	150 00	
10 new doors with glass, casings, &c.....	500 00	
Repairing base, &c.....	100 00	
" plastering, 400 yards new.....	300 00	
" floor.....	100 00	
135 superficial feet of glass roof.....	300 00	
135 " " " floor.....	300 00	
8 sqrs. tin, @ \$15.....	120 00	
Sash in each store, \$250 each.....	500 00	
100 feet of counters, @ \$8.....	800 00	
Shelving back of counters for books, &c.....	500 00	
	<hr/>	\$3,870 00
Painting wood work inside.....	500 00	
Frescoing and papering.....	700 00	
Awnings to sixty-three windows and two large ones in front.....	384 00	
	<hr/>	1,584 00
Plumbing.....	3,000 00	3,000 00
Furniture, carpets, &c.....	6,000 00	6,000 00
		<hr/>
		\$14,454 00

The estimate No. 2 is the estimate as changed by the committee of which Mr. Shepherd was chairman and returned to me.

I soon after told Mr. Shepherd that if it was the intention to adhere to this estimate very little could be done towards putting the building in proper condition, and I desired to know what was expected. He told me to do all that was necessary to make the building good but not to be extravagant. I then visited the Metzerott Building to get an idea of what was done there and keep as near that as possible. After this no regard was paid to the estimate, but such work as was necessary to put the building in good order was done. And I wish to state here that Mr. Shepherd and the Governor both went through the building at different times and always expressed themselves satisfied with the manner in which the improvements were being made.

On June 6th I wrote the following letter:

JUNE 6, 1871.

Board of Public Works of the Territorial Government, D. C.

GENTLEMEN: It is of such very great importance that there should be some provision made in the Morrison Building for the security of the records of the District against fire that I respectfully suggest that you allow me to make the south rear building fire proof, as I originally intended. I earnestly recommend this because I believe it to be the best and most economical arrangement for the uses of the Government.

Very respectfully, &c.,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

Mr. Shepherd told me to go on and fire proof the building, and I have not changed my opinion in regard to its being a necessary and proper protection of the property of the people. After it was decided to make the rear building fire proof, Mr. Shepherd told me to make it five stories and to make the inside lining 9 "thick, instead of 4," which more than doubled the cost stated in my estimate, as it made three times the brick work and added another floor of iron beams and 8 more windows, including the basement, which were not at first intended to be of iron.

It will also be noticed that in the estimate as reduced it was not intended to do any of this fire-proof building.

When the work had progressed for about one month Mr. Naylor asked for some money. I went to Mr. Shepherd and asked him how the money should be drawn. He told me Mr. Naylor would know, as he had charge of the fitting up of the Metzert Hall, and that it would be done in the same manner. I so stated to Mr. Naylor, when he brought me the following statement:

WASHINGTON D. C., June 24, 1871.

District of Columbia to J. G. Naylor, DR.

To labor to date	\$1,658 80
To lumber	1,500 00
To plastering	300 00
To brickwork	400 00
To ironwork	1,000 00

To architect.....	\$600 00
To plumbing, &c.....	1,000 00
	<hr/>
	6,458 80
	<hr/> <hr/>

for which I gave him the following note, viz :

June 30th, 1871.

H. D. COOKE,

Governor of the District of Columbia :

HONORABLE SIR: There is due J. G. Naylor, for different kinds of work and materials used in preparing the Morrison Building for the uses of the Territorial Government, at this date, six thousand four hundred and fifty-eight dollars and eighty cents, (\$6,458.80.)

Very respectfully,

Your ob'dt serv't,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

After getting certain names on this paper Mr. Naylor drew the money from the Freedman's Saving Bank, and according to his statement paid 5 per cent. discount for it. The next month Mr. Naylor presented to me the following statement, viz :

WASHINGTON, D. C., *July 24, 1871.*

District of Columbia, to J. G. Naylor,

DR.

To carpentering, hauling, hardware and mouldings.....	\$2,550 21
To whitening and cleaning.....	150 00
To plastering.....	350 00
To bricklaying and materials.....	1,000 00
To carpets and furniture.....	5,000 00
To lumber.....	1,400 00
To iron castings.....	1,000 00
To plumbing, &c.....	1,000 00
To painting and glazing.....	400 00
To kalsomining.....	145 80
	<hr/>
	12,996 01
	<hr/> <hr/>

and for which I gave the following note, viz :

July 24, 1871.

HENRY D. COOKE,

Governor of the District of Columbia :

HONORABLE SIR: There is due J. G. Naylor for different kinds of work and materials used in preparing the Morrison

Building for the uses of the Territorial Government at this date, and in addition to that already paid, the sum of twelve thousand nine hundred and ninety-six dollars, (\$12,996.)

Very respectfully,

Your ob't serv't,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

This money was also got from the Freedman's Bank, as Mr. Naylor says, by paying $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Everything went forward satisfactorily to all appearances, only that Mr. Shepherd and the Governor were anxious to have the work pushed forward as fast as possible, and which was done as far as was in my power; in fact I was complained of for being too severe in that respect. During the progress of the building the following letters were received, which will explain themselves, and also something in relation to the interest taken in the matter by all concerned. Those of Governor Cooke and Mr. Brown fix the date of the finishing of the building. I have in addition to these letters about fifty business letters in relation to this building, which any one, so desiring, can see by calling upon me.

July 6, 1871.

MOSES KELLY,

Cashier National Metropolitan Bank.

SIR: I have to certify that A. R. Shepherd & Bro. are doing the plumbing and gas fitting for the Territorial Government at the Morrison Building, Four-and-a-half street, in this city.

This work is authorized by the Governor, and is estimated to cost four thousand dollars; and will be paid for as soon as the appropriation is made for the work on this building.

Very respectfully, yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

Mr. Wm. Shepherd called on me, desiring to raise money on his bill, and desired the above letter.

July 21, 1871.

MR. SEARLE:

The Governor wants the work in Morrison Building hur-

ried along faster. You must have the bricklayer and plasterer hire more men, and put it through without delay.

Yours, truly,

A. R. SHEPHERD.

WASHINGTON, *August 24, 1871.*

MR. SEARLE, *Architect, &c.*

SIR: Please prepare at once the room allotted to the Register of the District, as he is desirous of moving into it.

Yours respectfully,

H. D. COOKE, *Governor.*

WASHINGTON, *August 31, 1871.*

MR. SEARLE:

DEAR SIR: I have seen Mr. Shepherd, and we visited together the rooms in southwest corner 4th story lower building, in which we were this morning. He says, to see you and request you to have them fitted up for my offices.

I will see you in person at, say 12½ on Friday, at the building.

Very respectfully,

J. M. BROWN.

WASHINGTON, *September 5, 1871.*

DEAR SIR: Will you please have the doors on two rooms, fourth floor, southwest corner, marked "Board of Public Works, Bureau of Contracts and Supplies" and get the furniture as early as possible, as I am ready to move in.

Very respectfully,

J. M. BROWN.

H. R. SEARLE, Esq., *Architect.*

WASHINGTON, *September 8, 1871.*

DEAR SIR: Will you please have "Board of Public Works, Bureau of Contracts and Supplies," put upon the glass of doors in southwest rooms, 4th floor, Morrison Building, and oblige,

Yours truly,

J. M. BROWN.

H. R. SEARLE, *Architect, &c.*

On the 18th or 19th of August, when very near completion and when some of the occupants were moving in, I went to

the building and met there the Governor and Mr. Shepherd, we went all through the building. Both expressed themselves well satisfied with every thing except the room which is now occupied by the attorney, W. A. Cook, and then intended for a draughtsman's room, was carpeted. The Governor desired the carpet taken up and matting put in its place, which was done.

At this time the Governor asked me what the cost of these improvements would be. I replied, I could not tell, as I had not seen any of the bills. He said, what do you think? I told him it would be a mere guess, perhaps \$38,000 or \$40,000. The Governor said he would like an estimate for an appropriation to hand in to the Legislature before they should adjourn. This I promised to do. (By referring to the above letter it will be seen that the building was occupied the latter part of August and 1st of September, and that I was asked for an estimate for an appropriation the 18th or 19th of August, only a few days before, and not when the work was little more than half done, as the Governor states in a letter written to me afterwards.) On returning to my office I found Mr. McKnight's first bill of furniture with the following note, viz:

DEAR SEARLE: You must, without fail, get in your amount on Morrison Building to-day, otherwise the Legislature will adjourn without making an appropriation. Add to my bill about five hundred for two more carpets and other small items; that will be square.

Yours,

J. W. McKNIGHT.

The Legislature adjourned the next Wednesday, the 23d of August.

Upon this I went over to the club house on E street and told W. A. Cook these facts, and that it was impossible to make any accurate or positive statement without the bills and stated the same thing that I had before stated to the Governor.

Soon after this I met Mr. Naylor at the building and told

him what I had done. He said the bills will amount to more money. I then asked him his opinion and we sat down together and guessed at the amount of each bill and set it down; in this way we made the amount up to about \$50,000. This we thought would be enough. I went back to the "club house" and changed my statement to W. A. Cook. He seemed to think it did not make much difference as to the amount, and caused to be written out a statement for Mr. Campbell to present to the Legislature, asking for \$48,770, as near as I remember. This estimate (so called) included Mr. McKnight's first bill of about \$12,000; it did not include the \$5,000 for furniture ordered afterwards, neither Mr. Boteler's bill of \$2,044.25, nor Mr. Creecy's bill of \$1,960, and which would have made the cost estimated at this time to be over \$59,000 and which all parties knew was not based upon any facts but a mere guess, as it was impossible to get the facts or the bills in time, and, as it was afterwards shown when the bills were presented, we did not guess high enough on any of the bills. About the 1st of September Mr. Shepherd told me he wanted to see Mr. Naylor. I met Mr. Naylor the same day and delivered the message. The next day Mr. Naylor came to me and said Mr. Shepherd wanted the bills on the Morrison Building within one hour. I told Mr. Naylor it was for him to get them; that for some reason, best known to Mr. Shepherd, he had kept everything of the kind out of my hands, and he (Mr. Naylor) must do as Mr. Shepherd said. He did get the bills together after a few days and came to me with the following bill:

NOTE.—The date of this bill will show that it was only about two weeks after the estimate for an appropriation was asked for before the bills were in.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Sept. 5th*, 1871.

District of Columbia, to J. G. Naylor,

DR.

To bill of repairs on Morrison's Building:

To hardware, lumber, freight, hauling, mould-

ing and turning, and sundries..... \$24,979 00

To brick, lime, cement, sand, slate, hauling bricklayers and laborers, time cleaning old bricks, cutting openings, tearing down walls, cleaning, oiling and penciling fronts of build- ing, &c.....	\$7,300 00	
To scrubbing, cleaning, whitening ceilings, cal- soming white, unpacking and handling fur- niture.....	1,350 00	
To furnishing and putting up awnings.....	775 00	
To scraping walls and papering the same.....	4,604 80	
To plastering and furnishing labor and material	2,650 00	
To furnishing iron beams, window frames, shutters, etc., for fire-proof building.....	4,484 43	
To iron grating and iron porch.....	700 00	
To putting up lightning rods.....	350 00	
To painting, glazing and materials.....	2,600 00	
To tinning.....	500 00	
To Schillinger's artificial stone pavement and concrete in cellar.....	1,960 00	
To stone work.....	250 00	
To bill of J. W. Boteler & Bro., for spittoons, towel racks, umbrella stands, &c.....	2,044 25	
To plumbing, gas-fitting, furnishing brackets, chandeliers, &c.....	6,777 66	
To furnishing carpets, furniture, &c.....	16,782 82	
	<hr/>	\$78,107 96

CR.

By cash.....		19,454 80
Balance due.....		58,653 16
To architectural services, 5 per cent. on cost...	3,905 00	
Survey on old building.....	50 00	
	<hr/>	3,955 39
		<hr/>
		62,608 55

The above bill is correct.

Washington, September 6, 1871.

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

I was a good deal surprised at the size of the bill. I went over the items of the bill. Those that I could measure, such as carpets, pavements, tinning, and lightning rods, I did so and from my own knowledge of the building, having been

there almost every day, and from Mr. Naylor's statement, I was satisfied the bill was not extravagant, though large, and so certified to it, and I still think the bill can be sustained by fair treatment. This bill was then taken by Mr. Naylor to Mr. Shepherd, when I received the following letter:

WASHINGTON, D. C., *6th September*, 1871.

MR. H. R. SEARLE:

DEAR SIR: Mr. Naylor handed me to-day what purports to be a bill for work at the Morrison Building, and your approval leads me to some doubts as to your sanity upon the subject. Please call upon me to-morrow morning as I desire to see you with respect to the account.

Truly yours,

ALEX. R. SHEPHERD & BROS.

I called on Mr. Shepherd, when he took out the bill and spoke of its being too much and a great deal more than was expected. I told him I knew that, but after looking them over, to the best of my judgment they were not extravagant. He was a good deal disturbed about it and said they must be cut down, in fact, he would not pay it; that they might sue for it. I asked him to say where it should be cut down, and he spoke of Naylor's bill, and said I must try and reduce that and others. Finally he concluded it could be arranged to apportion the amount in three bills, one against the District to cover the amount of appropriation, one against the Board of Public Works for their share of the building, and one for a new appropriation; and at the same time I was to reduce the bill if possible. The following is a verbatim copy of the apportionment that Mr. Shepherd wrote himself:

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS:

To two fire-proof vaults and fitting up for Board in building, (\$3,000 each).....	\$6,000 00
To fitting up rooms for Board, plastering, painting and car- penters' work.....	4,700 00
Awnings, for.....	300 00
Papering.....	1,500 00

Gas Fitting and Plumbing.....	\$1,971 00
Furniture, carpets, &c.....	6,702 00
Superintendents	1,100 00
	<hr/>
	\$22,273 00

\$78,000
22,273
<hr/>
56
8
<hr/>
\$48,000

Note.—The \$22,273 00 was to be charged to the Board of Public Works, the \$8,000 00 for a new appropriation, and the \$48,000 00 to come within the appropriation already made.

He also marked on the original bill how the items should be changed to correspond with this apportionment. I then took the bill again and called on Messrs. Naylor, McKnight, West, Alexander and others, but they all refused to take anything less, but wanted to increase the amount. I then apportioned the bills as near as possible as Mr. Shepherd desired and took them to him again. He was surprised that the bills were not reduced, but I told him they all refused to submit to it. It may have been at this meeting that Mr. Shepherd said they might sue for it, instead of the former one; but at this meeting the apportionment was not satisfactory to him, as they did not come quite to the amount of the appropriation; so I took the bills again and had them written over. This third time they were satisfactory. Mr. Shepherd then said to me: Mr. Mullet is your friend; I want you to take these bills to him, then to Mr. Magruder, then to W. A. Cook, and then bring them to me. I did so. When I called upon Mr. Mullet and stated my business, he became very violent and abusive, said he had nothing to do with this matter, and did not propose to have. I told him my only reason for calling was that Mr. Shepherd requested it, and I bid him good morning. I then went to 4½ street building; saw Mr. Magruder; he was a little more gentlemanly, but said it was something he had nothing to do with, and did not propose to have. I then went to see W. A. Cook, but he was not in. I then went back to Mr. Shepherd, and, feeling a good deal injured at the unjust

treatment I received from Mr. Mullet in a matter that I felt was a mere accommodation on my part, I told Mr. Shepherd that for all the money or patronage that the Board of Public Works, individually and collectively, might have, I would not take any such abuse. I told him the Governor had appointed me on this work and my duty was to report to him, which I proposed to do at once. Mr. Shepherd thought this would be the best, and he said he would in the meantime see the Governor. I then came back to my office and wrote the following letter to the Governor, viz :

WASHINGTON, D. C., *Sept.* 12, 1871.

HENRY D. COOKE,

Governor of the District of Columbia :

GOVERNOR: According to your appointment, May 20, 1871, as architect of the Morrison Building on Four-and-a-half street, and to prepare and submit a plan of alterations of the building for the purposes of the District offices, and to superintend the work which may be necessary to put the building in proper condition for the purposes indicated, I have caused such work to be done, and, as the building is ready for occupancy, I respectfully submit the bills for the same, which is herewith enclosed.

As will be seen upon examination, these bills exceed the appropriation asked for. When I made my estimate for the appropriation I ascertained, as near as possible, the amount of the different bills. But on receiving the actual bills they have in almost every case exceeded the amount estimated ; and especially in the bill of furniture, which, from necessity, was nearly or quite double after the estimate was made.

I have examined all these bills, and while in the aggregate they seem large, I do not think them extravagant. Every item of material or work charged has been furnished, and at reasonable prices. I am satisfied the expenditures will bear any scrutiny. In making these bills I have thought the Board of Public Works could bear their proportion of the expense, and have so charged them with it.

I have also made a bill to come within the appropriation, and another to make up the deficiency, for which I would respectfully recommend an additional appropriation be asked.

If the apportioning of the bills does not meet your approbation, I will have them made out as you desire.

This is the first commission I have received from the Corporation of Washington, and it is possibly the last.

I was agreeably disappointed at receiving even this from you, and desire to take this opportunity to thank you for it, and to say that while we have never met but little, I have always been treated very kindly by you, and am sorry that these bills should be so much in excess of the appropriation, and therefore be a source of annoyance to you, as they certainly are to me.

Very respectfully yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

I have no complete copy of this bill as last apportioned. I wrote this letter in this way, not mentioning Mr. Shepherd's name in relation to the apportionment, because I supposed Mr. Shepherd would see the Governor and be man enough to make the statement himself; but, from the Governor's subsequent action, I can but think he is entirely ignorant of the real facts even to this day. I also expected that the Governor would in any case send for me to make an explanation; and then, if it was concluded the bills should be cut down, that the workmen would be called upon to select an arbitrator, the Board of Public Works one, and if necessary a third one, and a fair settlement made; but instead of that, from this time forward, everything that this Board of Public Works could do to destroy my character, and put upon me the responsibility of a matter of which I had no control, has been done, as will be seen by the way in which matters were conducted after this.

Nothing more was heard from the bills for two or three weeks after I sent them to the Governor, when I met Mr. Shepherd one day, I think at his place of business on the avenue. He said he would like to have me come down to the Board of Public Works' room that evening at five o'clock. I did so. I met there Mr. Mullett, Mr. Magruder, and Mr. Shepherd, and here for the first time heard that Messrs. Mullett and Magruder were on a committee with Mr. Shepherd in this matter. Some conversation was had about the bills, when Mr. Mullett began to be a little lively and would

do nothing without a full report from the architect. I stated that I thought I had made all the report necessary for me to make under the circumstances, when he made some noisy reply, and Mr. Shepherd said: We don't want any more talk, but Mr. Searle will present the detailed bills of the work done on the building and we will see what there is about it. Upon this I came away; for after what had transpired between Mr. Shepherd and myself, I did not desire to have much to say. The next morning I called upon Mr. Shepherd at his own office; he was quite indifferent and wanted to know if I desired to see him. I said I did; that I did not clearly understand last evening what was desired of me, and so I came to him. He said they wanted the detail bills, and was somewhat loud in his expression, and wound up by saying, he was sorry; but that I had got myself in a very bad fix. I told him I was willing to take all the responsibility in this matter that belonged to me. That he knew very well that I had nothing to do with these bills so far. He wanted to know who had. I told him Mr. Naylor. He said, can't you have Mr. Naylor produce these bills? I said I could. I then asked him if the discount that had been paid and that which was expected yet to be paid to the Freedman's Bank should be added to these bills. He said, yes. I left him and told Mr. Naylor that he was to produce the bills in detail; which he did, but Mr. West, Mr. Mac-nichol, and I think Mr. Hudson, presented larger bills, not being satisfied with my allowance. These bills Mr. Naylor showed to me before presenting them, and also brought Mr. Frederick, the architect, to my office, to say that he had been through the building often during the progress of the work, and had examined the work for Mr. Naylor, and his estimate for the work and material included in Mr. Naylor's bill would amount to \$28,000, or about three thousand dollars more than I had allowed him. I stated that these bills could be presented as large as they choose but that I did not think the Board would allow any more than I had. Mr. Naylor then took these bills to Mr. Meed, the Auditor

of the Board of Public Works. I went with him. Mr. Meed said he thought it would be well for me to make a written statement as to the reason for the size of these bills, and I wrote the following:

Messrs A. R. SHEPHERD, A. B. MULLET and Col. MAGRUDER,
Committee of Board of Public Works:

HONORABLE GENTLEMEN: As you requested, Mr. Naylor has furnished a detail statement as far as possible of labor and material furnished in preparing the Morrison Building for the uses of the Territorial Government.

In explanation of the difference between the estimated cost of the work, and the actual bill, I have to say that it is next to impossible at best to give more than an approximate estimate of the cost of repairing an old building, and my estimate stated that it was only an approximate estimate; but in this case much more work was done than was estimated for; for instance, it was not intended to disturb any of the partitions in the fourth floor; a number of them were taken out and others put in to connect the halls.

In the plastering, much that I supposed would answer, in giving it a general inspection when upon commencing to patch it, it was found positively necessary to take whole ceilings off, and in moving partitions, considerable would fall off, and more loose would have to be taken off, increasing this bill very greatly.

In fire proofing the south rear building it was first intended to have but three stories finished, and for which I thought a 4-inch lining would answer; afterwards it was decided to add another story and finish the basement, and which necessitated a 9-inch lining, which, with the additional story, increased the expense by about three times.

In the plumbing it was supposed there was a sewer in $4\frac{1}{2}$ street; in fact so positive were people who were acquainted with the street that there was a sewer there that the street was twice opened to find it, but it was not there of sufficient depth to drain the water-closets in the rear, and a sewer had to be laid from the rear down through the alley to another connecting under Pennsylvania avenue. This also necessitated a change of water-closets, and another story was built on the north rear building to accommodate them, and iron soil pipes had to be extended the whole length of the main building to accommodate the closets of other offices. This

change of sewers changed the whole calculation for plumbing and necessarily increased the cost.

The mantles and grates at first appeared in order, but on a closer examination portions of the grates were gone. No such patterns being now accessible, new ones had to be put in, and in many cases mantles re-set; also some were broken and would not bear re-setting and new ones had to be put in their places.

The furniture as first estimated for I soon found on inquiring was not near enough, and the bill was largely increased—in fact all the separate kinds of work and materials were added to, and in many cases trebled, which necessarily greatly increased the carpenters' work and laborers' work in cleaning up, and the painters' and paperhangers' work.

In regard to the estimate for the appropriation, I have to say that the Governor asked me for such an estimate. Soon after, on the same day, I received intimation, not official, that the Legislature would adjourn that day and it was necessary for the estimate to be in for an appropriation before 2 o'clock; this gave me but a very short time to make it. I saw Mr. Naylor and together we made an estimate, as near as we could, of the different bills, only two or three of which we actually had, and which I so stated verbally to Mr. W. A. Cook when I handed in the estimate.

The bills which we did not have when handed in were more than was expected; and in the case of the furniture, which bill we had, it was found that there had not been much more than one half enough ordered, and with the knowledge of the Governor and Mr. Shepherd this bill was largely increased after the appropriation was made.

When the bills were called for about three weeks ago, they were ordered to be in within an hour; they were not made up in that time, but as soon as possible, and in this case some of them could not be got and had to be estimated.

In making this report I do not want to make any apology for myself or for any one else connected with the improvements at the Morrison Building, but merely state facts, and to say that I believe every one has tried to do the best that they could and get only a fair remuneration for their work.

Very respectfully yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE, *Architect.*

WASHINGTON, *September 30th, 1871.*

This was on Saturday, September 30th. On Monday, the

2d of October, I received the following letter from Governor Cooke :

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, Sept. 22, 1871.

HENRY R. SEARLE, Esq, *Architect, &c.* :

SIR: Your communication in reference to the cost of the alterations, &c., of the Morrison Building, and transmitting bills therefor, was received, and its contents caused me no little surprise. Your statement is so largely in excess of the estimate made by yourself, and when the work was more than one half completed, that I am at a loss to account for so great a discrepancy; except upon a hypothesis, either of incompetency or gross neglect of the architect in charge.

The reputation you have sustained in your profession would hardly justify a belief in your incompetency; but that there has been a neglect to watch expenditure, and a failure to exercise an intelligent supervision of the work as it progressed so as to keep it within the limits of the appropriation made therefor, (which was based upon your estimate,) there can be no doubt.

The first intimation I had of this excess of expenditures was conveyed to me by your letter, and received after the work had been completed.

Had the probability of such excess been known to me, or to the committee who entrusted you with the work, during the progress of the same, much of the outlay could have been, and no doubt would have been avoided.

As it is, after a careful consideration of the whole matter, I have concluded to refer your letter to the Committee, with instructions to have an accurate measurement of all work done, and an estimate of the cost thereof made by competent and disinterested architects, who will also take an inventory of the furniture supplied.

Very respectfully,

HENRY D. COOKE, *Governor.*

NOTE.—I never made any estimate at the time referred to in this letter "when the work was more than half completed." My only regular estimate was made eleven days after I was appointed, and I made a guess on the bills about two weeks before they were handed in.

It will be seen that this letter is dated the 22d of September. The envelope which I have was post-marked Oct. 1st. I received it Oct. 2d. This letter, it seems, was written about eight

days before it was mailed. I received it three weeks after I had sent him the bills. The Governor was advertised as having left here Sunday night, Oct. 1st, for New York and Europe, to meet his family; therefore it was impossible for me to make any reply to this, so I concluded to let these men act their own pleasure. The next move was, Messrs. Cluss and Rankin came to my office, and with them a big six-footer whom they did not introduce, and handed me the following letter:

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, D. C., Oct. 13, 1871.

HENRY R. SEARLE, Esq., *Washington, D. C.*:

SIR: You are informed that Messrs. J. C. Rankin and A. Cluss have this day been appointed a commission to examine and establish the value of all improvements in the building occupied by the District of Columbia, on Four-and-a-half street, and you are requested to furnish them all facilities in the prosecution of their duties.

Very respectfully,

ALEX. R. SHEPHERD, *Vice President.*

I showed them all they desired to see, when they proposed taking the papers away. I said, no. You can see these papers here; but this is a matter in which I feel I am not justly treated. I have taken no legal advice; but, without any disrespect to you, I feel it my duty to myself, and to the men who have done the work, to keep in my possession all papers that properly belong to me, and therefore declined to allow them to take the papers away. They left saying they would have to so report to their superiors.

I then took advice on the subject and was told I had done right, and my counsel then wrote for me a letter to Mr. Shepherd, stating that I would give all information required, but declined giving up the original papers. About this time I received the following, viz:

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, Oct. 16, 1871.

H. R. SEARLE, ESQ.

SIR: The undersigned having been appointed a commis-

sion to measure, value and appraise the work done and articles furnished to the building on Four-and-a-half street, in the city of Washington, occupied as offices by the Government of the District of Columbia, we have to request that you, as architect of these works, will furnish us with all the plans and specifications showing and detailing the state of the buildings before the improvements and alterations were made; also the plans and specifications under which these improvements and alterations were made, as well as all recorded information during the progress of said works.

We request that these papers will be left with Mr. Chas. I. Johnson, Treasurer's Office, Board of Public Works of D. C., Four-and-a-half street, Washington, by 4 o'clock P. M. on Tuesday, the 17th October, 1871.

Very respectfully,

J. C. RANKIN, } *Commissioners.*
ADOLPH CLUSS, }

Which I answered as follows:

OCTOBER 18, 1871.

ADOLF CLUSS, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR: If you desire it, I will have copies made of any papers I have in my possession in relation to the work at the Morrison Building.

I do not wish to be understood as opposing in any way any investigation or examination of this work.

Truly yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

Afterwards I received the following:

TREASURER'S OFFICE,
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
Washington, Oct. 18th, 1871.

H. R. SEARLE, Esq., *Architect, Washington, D. C.*

SIR: Acknowledging receipt of your letter, we have to say that we will be glad to receive from you authenticated copies of such plans, specifications and other papers relative to the improvements and alterations made on the Morrison Building as you may have in your possession.

If you could furnish us with the working drawings that were actually used on the building they would suit us as well as those which you retain for the files of your office, and also save you the trouble and expense of making copies.

What we require particularly is the plan showing the building before the alterations were made. Your specifications will, of course, note the changes, and we can readily recognize such changes in the building.

Please advise us when we may expect the desired papers.

Very respectfully,

J. C. RANKIN, } *Commissioners.*
ADOLPH CLUSS, }

I then prepared the plans they desired and sent them with the following letter:

OCTOBER 24, 1871.

Messrs. CLUSS and RANKIN :

GENTLEMEN: Herewith are copies of the plans of the Morrison Building, 4½ street, showing the alteration in the building.

These are copies of the plans I made to work by. There may be some slight difference between them and the actual work; for instance, I am not certain that the wash basins are all in the places indicated on the plan, as it was found in doing the work another location would be more convenient; but the plans show, as near as possible, interior arrangement of the building as it was before the alterations and as the building now is.

Any further information you may desire I shall be pleased to furnish you.

Very respectfully yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

I next received the following from the Architectural Iron Co., with the following copy of bill, viz:

NEW YORK, Oct. 24, 1871.

H. R. SEARLE, *Architect, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR SIR: We are in receipt of a letter from J. C. Rankin and Adolph Cluss, as a commission to measure and value work for building for District of Columbia, on Four-and-a-half street, inquiring for a bill of items for iron beams furnished by us. They send us a copy of our bill to you, \$2,985, and with an addition of "iron beams, &c., \$899.43," making our bill a total of \$3,884.43. This item of beams we presume

you added to our bill, and hence we must refer their request to you for answer.

We enclose the copy of bill.

Yours respectfully,

ARCHITECTURAL IRON WORKS,
J. W. CLARK.

The following is a copy of the bill, viz:

NEW YORK, Aug. 30, 1871.

H. R. Searle, for Morrison Building, Washington, D. C., to the Architectural Iron Works, (13th and 14th streets near Avenue C. Branch office 42 Duane street near Centre.)

DR.

5 sets of vestibules with inside and outside doors, (fire proof,)	
@ \$225 each.....	\$1,125 00
16 window frames and sash hung with weights and shutters	
@ \$95 each.....	1,520 00
4 window frames and sash, hung with hinges and shutters @	
\$50 each.....	200 00
10 locks and putting same on vestibule doors, @ \$14 each...	140 00
	<hr/>
	\$2,985 00
Iron beams, &c	899 43
	<hr/>
	\$3,884 43

A true copy, .

J. C. RANKIN.

which caused me to write the following letter to Cluss & Rankin, viz:

OCTOBER 25, 1871.

MESSRS. CLUSS & RANKIN:

GENTLEMEN: It seems to me unnecessary for you to send to New York or anywhere else for information that can be got here for the asking. I received, this morning, a letter from the Architectural Iron Co., of New York, containing a copy of their bill with an item of iron beams added at the bottom. This was all explained to Mr. Meed, Auditor of the Board of Public Works, but for your information I will volunteer its explanation again.

When these bills were called for I could not find readily the item bill from the Phoenix Iron Co., but had the gross amount on my books, and so marked it at the bottom of the bill from the Architectural Iron Co. I afterwards found on inquiring that as the bill had been paid it had been filed

with receipts by one of my clerks. And when the bill of items was called for by Mr. Meed, I furnished them, and you now have them among your papers.

There were two bills from the Phoenix Iron Co.—

One for beams for.....	\$686 30
And one for.....	20 31

Making a total of.....	\$706 61
I added to this a percentage of.....	192 82

Making up the item of.....	\$899 43
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As shown on the Architectural Iron Co's bill. The above percentage was not added for my benefit, but for the benefit of the parties from whom the money was got by Mr. Naylor at a discount to pay these bills with. This amount of percentage was not added for the Phoenix bill alone, but for all bills that I was responsible for and for which I had authority.

I am, gentlemen, very respectfully yours,
HENRY R. SEARLE.

They replied as follows:

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
OFFICE OF CHIEF OF BUREAU OF BUILDINGS,
Washington, Oct. 26, 1871.

HENRY R. SEARLE, ESQ.:

SIR: In reply to yours of the 25th inst., taking exception to our asking the Architectural Iron Works of New York for a copy of their account for articles supplied to the Morrison Building on Four-and-a-half street, we have to say, for the purpose of placing ourselves on record, that we did so immediately after you had absolutely refused to give us the information required in the investigation intrusted to us; a decision which was afterwards reconsidered by you in your communication of the 18th inst.

You will readily perceive that after your peremptory refusal to a courteous request, tendered by us personally, we had no recourse but to fall back on the written records which were presented by the bills and the evidence presented by the building itself; and we were compelled to accept the situation thus forced upon us.

Very respectfully,

J. C. RANKIN, }
ADOLF CLUSS, } *Commissioners.*

To which I replied as follows :

OCTOBER 27, 1871.

MESSRS. CLUSS AND RANKIN :

GENTLEMEN : In reply to yours of the 26th, I have to say that I do not take exceptions to your making inquiries in relation to the bills at the Morrison Building anywhere you choose ; but I said it was unnecessary for you to send to New York or anywhere else for information you could get here for the asking. And for the purpose of placing myself on record, I have further to say that when you came to my office and personally asked for information required in the investigation intrusted to you of the bills at the Morrison Building, I showed you all the papers then in my possession, and never in any way refused you any information you desired ; and fortunately have proof of this fact.

But when you desired to take away the only copy of the plans of the building I had, and on which were memoranda of importance to me, I said I had not taken any legal advice on the subject, but felt that I could not let them go out of my possession ; but that you could see them at any time in my office, and that I would furnish all the information you desired, as far as in my power. I refused to let these plans go, because I felt, in justice to the men who had done the work on the building and to myself, I should keep these papers in my possession. I have since taken some advice on the subject, and was told I was right ; and from the tenor of your letter I am still more convinced of the fact.

Very respectfully, yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

This commission went to work measuring, and began asking those who were employed on the building how much Mr. Searle was to receive of their bill, but they soon found they had made a mistake, and stopped it. Here matters rested again ; this commission settling such bills as they could, in one way and another, and about which I propose to speak before I am through. After waiting what I thought a suitable time for the commission to get through their labors and make a report, I wrote the following to the Governor :

WASHINGTON, *Jan.* 8, 1872.

HENRY D. COOKE,

Governor of the District of Columbia :

HONORABLE SIR : It is now over three months since you

appointed a commission to examine the bills for preparing the "Morrison Building" for the district offices.

I did not receive your notice that you should appoint such a commission until after you had left the city for New York and Europe; and, while I felt your action to be hasty and unjust, it seemed to me best to wait patiently until you had an opportunity to carefully examine the bills, feeling certain that such an examination would exonerate me from all blame in the matter; and had I been asked by you for an explanation, I am satisfied this matter would have been settled long ago.

I feel now as if time enough had elapsed for any examination, and therefore I respectfully ask what action you have decided to take in the matter.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

To this I received no answer. After waiting two weeks I wrote the following:

JANUARY 24, 1872.

HENRY D. COOKE,

Governor of the District of Columbia:

HONORABLE SIR: That there shall be no possibility of a misunderstanding between us, and no hasty action on my part, I take the liberty of addressing you once more in relation to my position as architect of the "Morrison Building."

Knowing, as I do, that in every particular I have acted according to your instructions as given me through your committee, and most of these instructions in writing, your outrageous treatment of me is something I cannot understand.

I do not pretend to teach you anything as a business man, but I intuitively know that if I have done wrong it is your duty to prosecute me, and if I have not done wrong it is your duty, as a public officer, to protect me; and in either case you have no right to condemn me without an explanation.

I shall wait for one week from to-day at 12 o'clock, and then, if I hear nothing satisfactory from you, I shall feel it my duty to protect myself in such a manner as I see fit. My present intention is to then publish every fact connected with the "Morrison Building," so far as I am concerned, and at the same time commence suit for such amount as may

be due me for services rendered. Hoping that there may yet be a mutual explanation that will be satisfactory to both of us,

I am, very respectfully, yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

This brought the following answer:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
WASHINGTON, *January 29, 1872.*

DEAR SIR: I am in receipt of your letter of the 24th inst., in which you request an opportunity to make your explanations concerning the repairs on the Morrison Building. In compliance with the request, I have to say that I will meet you with the Committee of the Board of Public Works having the matter in charge, this afternoon at 5 o'clock, at the office of the Board.

I am, very respectfully,

H. D. COOKE, *Governor.*

H. R. SEARLE, *Architect, &c.*

I answered that in this way:

JANUARY 29, 1872.

HENRY D. COOKE, *Governor of the District of Columbia:*

HONORABLE SIR: Your favor, requesting me to meet the Committee of the Board of Public Works, has been received. My request was to meet you personally and place facts in your possession with which I must assume you are not acquainted.

No good can result from a meeting with a Committee the members of which have prejudged the case, and who have maligned my character, and done all in their power to injure my reputation as an architect. My employment was effected through you, and you owe it to yourself as well as to me to hear my explanation, and then act as to you may seem just. The only meeting I can have with your committee will be in the presence of a court, where common civility will be accorded and something like justice done.

I shall be pleased to meet you personally at any time you may appoint.

Very respectfully yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

This brought a verbal answer by one of my clerks to meet the Governor at his bank the next morning at 10 o'clock.

This I did. The Governor met me in such a manner that it did not seem that any good would be accomplished for me to make any statement, and I so told him. He rather apologized for his manner, and desired me to state my object in meeting him. I gave him some of the facts given here, when he stated that in his great amount of business many matters must be left to committees; this was one that he had left in that way, and he did not know much about it. He said Mr. Shepherd was very friendly towards me, and he, the Governor, wished that I would meet him and Mr. Shepherd. This I finally agreed to do, and the time was set at 3 o'clock that afternoon, at Mr. Shepherd's own office. We met there, and after some explanations, Mr. Shepherd stated that he was sorry the committee had taken the course they had, and that if he was back again he should do differently; that they had not intended any injury to me; that the whole matter was a mistake, and that I should so consider it. We parted seemingly the best of friends; and why I should be singled out to be attacked by their counsel, in his argument before the late investigating committee, is more than I can understand.

I have never yet seen a report of this commission, and do not know how all the bills were settled, but it was stated by the Governor that these bills had been greatly cut down, and in the words of their eminent counsel, "they have fearlessly cut them down to 58,000 dollars."

The following is what I know about it; taking the items from the original bill, which Mr. Naylor handed in. (It is customary for all builders, where they have charge of work and attend to the collecting and paying the bills to charge 10 per cent. on all bills not immediately connected with their own work, and 25 per cent. on material and labor which comes under their own department. This percentage of 10 per cent. was not charged on all the bills, but those on which it was charged showed for themselves; also the percentage that had been or was expected to be paid to the Freedmen's Bank was charged on the face of some of the bills, not all.

This percentage, which this commission threw out, amounted, according to my best recollection, to about \$3,000.)

Item 1. Mr. Naylor's individual bill, \$24,979. Mr. Naylor tells me they have reduced this item about \$10,000, but he refused settlement. They allowed him arbitrators, but for some reason the arbitrators gave their settlement without hearing his side at all; therefore he refused to accept this as a settlement, and it does not appear to me that his bill is cut down yet.

Item 2. Simpson, the bricklayer's bill, \$7,300. In this bill were some items connected with the brick work not done by Simpson, which Mr. Naylor added, and which showed on the face of the bill. Mr. Simpson told me these items were taken off, and then he got his pay; he also, at the same time, received an appointment, under Mr. Chase on sewers, which I believe he still holds.

Item 3. For whitening the ceilings, scrubbing, unpacking furniture, &c., \$1,350.. Most of this was paid before the commission was appointed, and was not cut down more than the percentage.

Item 4. Hogan's bill for awnings, \$775; percentage taken off and bill increased.

Item 5. Paperhangers' bills, \$4,604.80; were reduced a little beyond the percentage, but Mr. Alexander, I know, was greatly dissatisfied, and accepted it only because he thought it the cheapest way.

Item 6. Mr. West, plasterer: original bill \$2,650. This bill, by percentage and deduction, was reduced to \$2,100. Mr. West was not satisfied with even my settlement of this account and wanted it measured by some one else, and came to me for a letter to Shepherd, which I gave as follows:

SEPTEMBER 28, 1871.

Hon. A. R. SHEPHERD.

DEAR SIR: Mr. West does not feel satisfied with my measurement of his work and desires Mr. Morsell to measure it. I also join him in the request that you will ask Mr. Morsell to measure his work.

Very respectfully yours,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

Mr. West put in a bill for \$3,600, but took \$2,100 and a superintendency of men on the street.

Item 7. Iron work, beams, &c., \$4,484.43. After deducting percentage, they deducted \$1,000 off the Architectural Iron Co. The Company refused to take it, and have sued the Government.

Item 8. Iron steps, &c., \$700. I never heard how settled.

Item 9. For lightning rods, \$350. After deducting percentage, this bill was reduced to about \$212. The man tells me before witnesses that he wanted money bad. His child had recently died; he owed for funeral expenses, and he had a deed of trust due on his house. He was glad to get anything, and so took this settlement and sold it to the Freedmen's bank for about \$192.

Item 10. Painting and Glazing, \$2,600. Percentage taken off, and one of these bills increased.

Item 11. Tinning, \$500. I never heard how this item was settled.

Item 12. Schillinger and tar pavement, \$1,960. Percentage taken off.

Item 13. Stone work, \$250. I think was paid.

Item 14. Boteler's bill, \$2,044.45. No percentage on this bill, and it was not cut down.

Item 15. Shepherds' plumbing, gas-fitting, &c., \$6,777.66. No percentage was on this bill, and it was not cut down.

Item 16. Furnishing carpets, furniture, &c., \$16,782.82. No percentage on this bill, and the bill was not cut down, but Mr. Wight's portion increased.

While I have no doubt these bills have been cut down to \$58,000, I do not believe they have been settled at that amount. I do not object to this Board of Public Works settling any bills they may have at the lowest possible rate, but I do object to their accusing me of acting unfaithfully and without economy in a matter over which I had no control; and trying to injure me before the people by misrepresenting that I certified to bills that were grossly wrong. For while I think, as I stated before, these bills were large, I

do believe that with any fair and satisfactory settlement they would not be reduced much ; for the bills from which the greatest reductions were made are either not settled or were settled with some consideration from another source. And the bills of the officers of the government are reported as correct. If one bill was right, they all were ; for in my judgment they were all equally high, and Mr. Shepherd's bill went quite as much beyond my expectation as any of the rest, as will be seen by comparing my letter to Moses Kelly for Mr. Shepherd with Mr. Shepherd's bill as settled. The letter says, \$4,000. Shepherd's bill as rendered and paid, \$6,777. As to the percentage charged by Mr. Naylor, he has a right to the builders' percentage ; but the committee, Mr. Shepherd, chairman, refused to give it on the ground that Mr. Naylor was employed the same as the other men, and that they were all directly under me, and not under Mr. Naylor. This I must deny, as it will be seen that Mr. Naylor twice drew the money to pay, and did pay, every one connected with the work, even to myself. And then, too, if such was the fact, I do not think Mr. Shepherd had a right to do any of the work connected with the building ; for he and myself (for the time being) were officers of Government, and I had no right to employ him, and I did not. He did his work for Mr. Naylor.

The public now have all the facts connected with the work, and can judge who acted faithfully and economically in this matter.

Very respectfully,

HENRY R. SEARLE.

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